

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A method, system, and computer program product for communicating with machines connected to a network. Information sent to or from the machines is transmitted using electronic mail. The electronic mail may be transmitted over the Internet, but also may remain within a local or wide area network. When receiving electronic mail, the electronic mail message may be sent to a user who reads information regarding the purpose of the electronic mail message in the body of the message. When the user is satisfied that it is safe to perform the functions requested by the email, the user may execute a file which is attached to the incoming email message in order to perform the appropriate diagnostic or control operations. Alternatively, the incoming email message may contain a code or is sent to an address which causes automatic execution of the desired functions. In this embodiment, it may not be necessary for the user to manually perform any action in order to allow the appropriate processing to begin. Email messages may also be transmitted from the computer which is attached to the device which is being monitored or controlled and include information regarding the status or capabilities of the attached device.